

Appl. No. : 09/998,682
Response Dated : 12/1/2005

Attorney Docket No.: 109878.126 US1

REMARKS

This paper is filed in response to the Office Action mailed September 28, 2005. Claims 1-46 have been previously cancelled. Claims 47-64 remain currently pending in this application. Claims 47 and 50 are independent and have been amended. In addition, dependent claims 51 and 52 have been amended.

The Examiner rejected claims 47 and 50 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Applicants' amendments to claims 47 and 50 address the Examiner's concerns. With respect to the term "set of materials," Applicants use that term broadly in the present claims, as in the specification as filed, to refer to documents or other collections of information that can be represented in a database or used in an information search and navigation system, as described for example at pages 6 and 7 of the specification. This material may correspond to documents, products, or other items (as discussed, for example, at page 10 and in Figures 1-13 and the accompanying portions of the specification).

The Examiner also rejected the claims under 25 U.S.C. § 103 in view of Subramaniam (U.S. Pat. No. 6763351) in view of at least Yahoo, based on a 1999 web archive.

As the Examiner essentially acknowledges, Subramaniam does not teach (among other limitations) computing dynamically a first navigation state that corresponds to a particular expression that represents a multi-term interpretation of a free-text query, the expression including a conjunction of first and second attribute-value pairs, wherein the subset of the materials corresponding to the first navigation state consists of at most those materials that are each described by the first attribute-value pair and the second attribute-value pair, and the first and second attribute-value pairs are mutually incomparable. However, both independent claims include these limitations.

The Examiner cites only Yahoo as allegedly disclosing these limitations. Applicants note that in related Application No. 09/573,305, which includes some similar limitations, the Patent Office recognized that Yahoo does not teach or suggest navigation states having first and second attribute-value pairs wherein the materials corresponding to the navigation state consist of at most those materials described by both the first and the second attribute-value pairs, with the first and second attribute-value pairs being mutually incomparable.

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With Yahoo, nothing that could be described as a navigation state meets these limitations. The Examiner asserts that "Art History" and "Arts Therapy" could be two attribute-value pairs for a "Directory>Arts" navigation state, in which Art History and Arts Therapy are mutually incomparable. However, Directory>Arts is a much broader category than Art History or Arts Therapy. The Examiner's Exhibit I shows some 25 other categories within Directory>Arts, each with a different number of items within the category. Each of these categories has a different subset of the items within the broader Directory>Arts category. These categories under Directory>Arts, consequently, do not meet the requirement that the materials corresponding to the navigation state consist of at most those materials described by the first attribute-value pair and by the second attribute-value pairs. That is, the materials corresponding to Directory>Arts consist of **more** materials than just the materials that are in Art History and are in Arts Therapy. However, to teach the limitations, the materials corresponding to Directory>Arts would need to consist of **at most** the materials in both Art History and Arts Therapy.

Additionally, Yahoo does not include a navigation state that corresponds to a particular expression that represents a multi-term interpretation of a free-text query as required by the claims. While Yahoo permits free-text queries that include multiple terms or terms that could correspond to multiple categories, the resulting expression is not a conjunction of attribute-value pairs as required by the claims.

Consequently, it is believed that the current claims are allowable over the prior art of record.

If there are any remaining issues, the Examiner is urged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number provided below.

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The Commissioner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 08-0219 for any fees that may be due, or to credit Deposit Account No. 08-0219 any overpayment, in connection with this paper.

Respectfully submitted,



Date: December 1, 2005

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